



Claim Amendments

~~Claims 1-56 (canceled)~~

~~Claim 57 (previously presented):~~

A picking rake for collecting yard debris comprising:

~~a first and second rake units; and~~

~~the first rake unit having a first rake head, and a first  
rake handle coupled to the first rake head; and~~

~~the second rake unit having a second rake head, and a  
second rake handle coupled to the second rake head; and~~

~~each of the first and second rake heads having an external  
side and an inner side; and~~

~~each of the first and second rake heads having a lower end  
and an upper end, wherein the lower ends of the first and second  
rake heads have a plurality of prongs forming a first plane; and~~

~~a first grip handle attached to the first rake handle, and  
a second grip handle attached to the second rake handle, wherein  
each of the first and second grip handles form a second plane  
substantially parallel to the first plane, wherein the first and  
second grip handles and the first and second rake heads are  
facing toward each other when the picking rake is used for  
picking up debris; and~~

~~wherein the first grip handle has a first portion and the  
second grip handle has a second portion, and one of the first  
and second portions has a first connecting means for holding the  
right and left rake units in a side by side relationship along  
their inner sides when the picking rake is used for raking yard  
debris; and~~

each of the first and second rake handles having lower and upper ends, wherein the lower ends are removably connected to the respective upper ends of the first and second rake heads, and wherein one of the upper ends of the first and second rake handles has an aperture through which a second connecting means is extended for flexibly and pivotally holding and connecting the first and second rake handles; and

wherein at least one of the first and second grip handles are located at a midsection of at least one of the first and second rake handles, and the first and second grip handles are located substantially remote from the upper ends of the first and second rake heads.

**Claim 58** (previously presented): The picking rake for collecting yard debris of claim 57, wherein the first and second rake heads have a third fourth connecting means for holding the first and second rake heads in a side by side relationship when the picking rake is used for raking yard debris.

**Claim 59** (previously presented): The picking rake for collecting yard debris of claim 57, wherein the first connecting means have an attaching means being secured to one of the first and second grip portions.

**Claim 60** (previously presented): The picking rake for collecting yard debris of claim 57, wherein the first connecting means of one of the first and second grip portions resiliently snaps onto and hold the other one of the first and second grip portions when the picking rake is used for raking yard debris.

**Claim 61** (previously presented): The picking rake for collecting yard debris of claim 57, wherein one of the first and second

rake handles comprises at least two telescoping tubes whereby the telescoping tubes can be extended when gathering debris and retracted when picking debris.

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**Claim 62 (new):** A picking rake for collecting yard debris comprising:

a first and second rake units; and

the first rake unit having a first rake head and a first rake handle coupled to the first rake head; and

the second rake unit having a second rake head and a second rake handle coupled to the second rake head; and

wherein each of the first and second rake heads have an external side and an inner side; and

wherein each of the first and second rake heads have a lower end and an upper end, wherein the lower ends of the first and second rake heads have a plurality of prongs; and

connecting means on at least one of the rake units for joining the two rake units towards the inner sides of the rake heads, the handles substantially parallel and next to each other, the lower ends of the rake heads aligned forming substantially one functional rake head, each rake head contributing to the total raking span; and

wherein both rake heads substantially lie on a first infinite plane; and

wherein the first rake handle comprises a first elongated member and a first hand grip and the second rake handle comprises a second elongated member and a second hand grip; and

wherein the first and second elongated members each has a lower end and an upper end; and

wherein the lower ends of the first and second elongated members are coupled to the upper ends of their respective rake heads; and

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wherein the first and second hand grips each comprise a branch extending substantially transversely from their respective elongated members at a section intermediate the upper ends of their respective rake heads and the upper ends of their respective elongated members; and

wherein each of the first and second hand grips lie on a second infinite plane; and

wherein the first and second infinite planes each contain a common intersecting line; and

wherein the first and second hand grips and the first and second rake heads are facing toward each other when the picking rake is used for picking up debris.

**Claim 63(new):** The picking rake in claim 62 further including abutment means to abut the two rake units together.

**Claim 64(new):** The picking rake in claim 62 wherein the first hand grip has a first portion and the second hand grip has a second portion, said first and second portions substantially adjacent each other when the rake units are brought next to each other prior to being connected; and wherein said connecting means comprise a first connecting means on one of the first and second portions comprising a resilient member that snaps onto and holds the other one of the first and second portions when the picking rake is used for picking yard debris.

**Claim 65 (new)** The picking rake in claim 63 wherein the abutment means comprise a recessed portion disposed on a section of one of the rake handles, the recessed portion sized to snugly receive the inner and outer dimensions of said connecting means.

**Claim 66(new):** The picking rake in claim 64 further including:

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- a) a first aperture on the resilient member,
  - b) a second aperture on the other one of the first and second portions,
  - c) a snap button disposed inside the other one of the first and second portions, the snap button having a button head, the button head outwardly engaged in the second aperture,
  - d) wherein the resilient member snaps onto and holds the other one of the first and second portions, the button head further engaging outwardly into the first aperture when the rake units are joined together for raking debris.

**Claim 67(new):** The picking ~~rake~~ in claim 63 wherein the inner side of at least one of the first and second rake heads overlap the inner side of the other rake head and functions as an abutment means.

**Claim 68(new):** The picking ~~rake~~ in claim 62 wherein the connecting means comprise an aperture or equivalent disposed on the upper ends of one of the first and second rake handles through which a second connecting means is extended for flexibly and pivotally holding and joining the first and second rake handles.

**Claim 69(new):** The picking ~~rake~~ in claim 62 further including a first arm leverage on the first rake unit and a second arm leverage on the second rake unit; and

wherein each of the first and second arm leverages comprise a branch extending substantially transversely from their respective elongated members forming a structure with an opening for loosely receiving a forearm of a user; and

wherein each of the first and second arm leverages comprise at least a forearm support member that also lies on a third and fourth infinite planes respectively, said third and fourth infinite planes substantially parallel to each other and substantially normal to the first and second infinite planes; and

wherein the first and second arm leverages are located intermediate their respective first and second hand grips and the upper ends of their respective elongated members; and

wherein the first and second arm leverages are facing toward each other when the picking rake is used for picking up debris.

**Claim 70 (new):** The picking rake in claim 69 wherein at least one of the first and second hand grips has a first portion and the other one of the first and second hand grips has a second portion, said first and second portions substantially adjacent each other when the rake handles are brought next to each other prior to being connected; and

wherein one of the first and second portions contain a first connecting means that resiliently snaps onto and holds the other one of the first and second portions when the picking rake is used for raking yard debris.

**Claim 71 (new):** The picking rake in claim 69 wherein at least one of the first and second arm leverages has a first portion and the other one of the first and second arm leverages has a second portion, said first and second portions substantially adjacent each other when the rake handles are brought next to each other prior to being connected; and

wherein one of the first and second portions contain a first connecting means that resiliently snaps onto and holds the

other one of the first and second portions when the picking rake is used for raking yard debris.

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**Claim 72(new):** The picking rake in claim 69 wherein the terminals of the first and second hand grips further includes extensions connecting to their respective first and second arm leverages.

**Claim 73(new):** The picking rake in claim 62 wherein the first and second elongated members are lying on the first infinite plane; and wherein said connecting means comprise a third connecting means on one of the elongated members of the rake handles, wherein the third connecting means resiliently snaps onto and holds the other elongated member when the rake units are joined together for raking debris.

**Claim 74(new):** The picking rake in claim 62 wherein said connecting means comprise:

- a) a resilient member disposed on the elongated member of one of the rake handles, said resilient member having a first aperture, and
- b) a second aperture disposed inside the elongated member of the other rake handle, and
- c) a snap button disposed inside the elongated member of the other rake handle, said snap button having a button head, said button head outwardly engaged in the second aperture,
- d) wherein the resilient member snaps and holds the elongated member of the other rake handle, the button head further engaging outwardly into the first aperture when the two rake units are joined for raking debris.

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**Claim 75 (new):** The picking rake in claim 62 wherein said connecting means comprise:

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- a) a tube disposed on the elongated member of one of the rake handles, said tube having a first aperture,
  - b) a second aperture disposed on the elongated member of the other rake handle,
  - c) a snap button disposed inside the elongated member of the other rake handle, said snap button having a button head outwardly engaged into the second aperture, and
  - d) wherein the tube snugly receives the elongated portion of the other rake handle when the other rake handle is inserted into the tube, the button head further engaging outwardly into the first aperture when the rake units are joined for raking debris.

**Claim 76 (new):** The picking rake in claim 62 further including:

- a) at least one third elongated member dimensionally receivable inside one of the first and second elongated members, and
- b) cooperating retaining means on the third member and on one of the first and second elongated members for telescoping the third elongated member in and out of one of the first and second elongated members,  
whereby the third elongated member is extended when raking and retracted when picking.

**Claim 77 (new):** A handle for picking yard debris comprising:

- a first elongated member having a lower end and an upper end; and
- wherein the lower end of the elongated member can be coupled to a holding head; and

wherein the holding head and the elongated member lie substantially on a first infinite plane; and

a hand grip comprising a branch extending substantially transversely from the elongated member and located intermediate the upper end of the holding head and the upper end of the elongated member; and

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wherein the hand grip lies on a second infinite plane; and wherein the first and second infinite planes each contain a common intersecting line; and

a rigid arm leverage comprising a branch extending substantially transversely from the elongated member forming a structure with an opening for loosely receiving the forearm of a user; and

wherein the branch includes at least a forearm support member that also lies on a third infinite plane substantially normal to the first and second infinite planes; and

wherein the arm leverage is located intermediate the hand grip and the upper end of the elongated member; and

whereby the hand grip and the arm leverage together comprise an effective holding and arm leveraging means; and

whereby a pair of handles adapted for the left and right hands of a user provides a very effective means of picking yard debris.

**Claim 78 (new):** The handle in claim 77 wherein the exposed terminal of the hand grip is further extended to meet the arm leverage.

**Claim 79 (new):** The handle in claim 77 further including:

- a) at least one second elongated member dimensionally receivable inside the first elongated member, and

b) cooperating retaining means on the first and second elongated members for telescoping the second elongated member in and out of the first elongated member, and whereby the second elongated member is extended for gathering and retracted for picking.

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**Claim 80 (new):** The picking rake in claim 57 further including telescoping means on one of the rake handles comprising:

- a) at least one elongated member dimensionally receivable inside one of the first and second rake handles, and
- b) cooperating retaining means on the elongated member and on one of the first and second rake handles for telescoping the elongated member in and out of one of the first and second rake handles, and  
whereby the elongated member is extended for raking and retracted for picking.